

Opera and dozens of other arts groups; 7,700 employees of arts groups; and 1,500 arts-related businesses. I represent Ken von Roenn, a glass artist whose work decorates Reagan National Airport. He created an institution called Glassworks which has brought hundreds and thousands of people to Louisville, made it a national center for glass art and has provided a great economic generator in Louisville.

In total, the arts contribute in my district alone more than \$250 million annually, including \$100 million on arts-related spending like restaurants and hotels and so forth. All told last year, 5 million people attended arts events and cultural events in my district and they paid \$5.6 million in local taxes.

Now I don't know a lot about Mr. HENSARLING's district or Mr. MCHENRY's district, but I do know this: I know in Mr. HENSARLING's district there are 1,317 arts businesses employing 3,229 people. The economic impact of the arts in Dallas, which he represents part of, was \$550 million in 2006. In Mr. MCHENRY's district there are 947 arts-related businesses employing 3,043 people. In North Carolina, there are 17,000 businesses employing 159,000 people. Nationally, the impact of the arts is \$166 billion, 5.7 million jobs, \$104 billion in household income, \$7.9 billion in local taxes, \$9.1 billion in State taxes and \$12.6 billion in Federal taxes. Now somebody may say that that's not an economic benefit, but I believe the facts are contrary to that. And listen to what the Chicago Tribune wrote in an editorial back in February talking about the stimulus funding for the arts:

After all, the argument that the labor-intensive arts are not job-creation engines is patently absurd; they just fuel different kinds of struggling workers, workers unaccustomed to bonuses. Their role in generating billions of dollars in ancillary economic activity for stores, restaurants and the travel business has been proven in bucketloads of surveys and analyses.

Let's think about the arts funding in another way. Fifty million dollars as a percentage of this year's budget is one seventy-thousandths of the budget. For someone who's trying to decide how to spend \$35,000 in annual income, their personal budget, it's 50 cents. That's the equivalent amount. I don't know one American probably who hasn't bought a CD, hasn't gone to a movie, hasn't gone to a concert or gone to a play and spent a lot more than 50 cents.

Mr. HENSARLING offered the contrast of one piece of sculpture—a selective one at that—to a veterans clinic, but I would offer another picture: a picture of an F-22 jet fighter, \$143 million for one jet fighter plane.

This is about priorities and the arts are an important priority for this country.

FISCAL YEAR 2010 BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. I thank the Speaker.

Madam Speaker, listening to some of our friends on the other side, I am struck sometimes with the idea of—have you no shame? The crowd that brought us from record surpluses in 8 brief years to record deficits—have you no shame? The crowd that rode this economy, a healthy economy that was growing jobs, into the economic ditch—have you no shame? The crowd that oversaw the dismantling of strict enforcement of regulation and prevented regulation of the financial services industry to any great degree when it came to complicated financial instruments and then is surprised at the results—have you no shame?

Madam Speaker, today I rise to discuss the fiscal year 2010 budget and its critical importance to our Nation's future. The latest estimate of our 2008 fourth quarter GDP decline is now 6.3 percent. After a record job loss of 681,000 in December, January and February losses both topped 650,000. Almost 2 million Americans have lost their jobs in just the last 3 months. The Federal Reserve has estimated that GDP for the entirety of this year will decline between 0.5 percent and 1.3 percent, which underscores the dire need for action. Every further contraction in our economy represents additional Americans who lose their jobs.

President Obama has set a bold agenda to heal our ailing economy. While no one action will instantly fix the economic troubles we have been left by the Bush administration, the President and this Congress have taken a number of steps to put us on the path to recovery. Like many of my colleagues, I have already seen positive effects of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act in my district:

A community health center at risk of closing its doors received funding and is treating patients today.

Local small businesses that were laying off workers are now rehiring them to complete transportation projects.

But there's more to accomplish. President Obama's vision is transformative and provides for the critical investments in America that have been neglected for far too long. Deficit reduction, middle-income tax relief, health care reform, education and energy independence are the linchpins of the President's plan.

Under President Obama's plan, at the end of 4 years, we will have cut the current year's deficit of \$1.8 trillion, most of it inherited from President Bush, by two-thirds, to \$586 billion. The fiscal year 2010 concurrent resolution on the budget reduces nondefense discretionary spending over the next 10 years to its lowest level as a percentage of GDP in almost 50 years. This Congress expects similar fiscal responsibility from the private sector and that is why

the Budget Committee cut \$250 billion reserved for future financial sector bailouts.

The President's vision supports the middle class by expanding the child tax credit, maintaining the elimination of the marriage tax penalty, carrying forward the Making Work Pay tax credit, maintaining the estate tax and capital gains tax reductions, and ensuring that the alternative minimum tax does not hit the millions of working Americans in danger of being affected. There are \$1.5 trillion of tax cuts in this budget.

The President's vision supports meaningful health care reform as well. Even as overall health care costs rose over the last 8 years, the number of Americans without health insurance increased from 13.7 percent of the population to 15.3 percent. Under the President's proposal, we will be able to offer health care to the 46 million Americans currently without coverage.

The President's vision invests in energy independence and promotes a clean energy economy that creates jobs. For too long, a sustainable and clean energy policy has been ignored and our dependence on foreign oil has grown. Increasing our investment in energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies will promote America's energy independence and safeguard our environment through a reduction in greenhouse gas production.

In recognition of the critical role that education plays in our economic productivity, the President's budget builds upon the classroom support provided in the Recovery Act. From enhancing Head Start and early childhood learning opportunities to making college more affordable through expanding Pell Grants, this budget will prepare our children to become productive, contributing members of the global economy.

In addition, the President's vision places national defense on a sustainable course, including a 4 percent increase in defense spending for fiscal year 2010. It includes enhanced support for our veterans, finally fulfilling the duty this country owes for the service they have given.

The President's vision prepares for the reauthorization of the transportation funding bill that will invest in transit and infrastructure projects throughout the country.

Now I would like to confirm what is not in the concurrent resolution on the budget. Much has been made of the potential funding sources the President has listed in his blueprint. Madam Speaker, I would point out, the concurrent budget resolution that is scheduled to come before the full House does not increase taxes. In fact, it would reduce them. It simply lays the foundation for fulfilling President Obama's vision and making the critical investments in America's future. Specific tax policies will be pursued by the tax-writing committees of the Congress where I expect further modifications

and hope to see elimination of the proposed caps on mortgage interest and charitable deductions.

Madam Speaker, I look forward to supporting the President's budget.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 9 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until noon.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BLUMENAUER) at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Let all the Nations be judged before You. Lord, You alone can touch all the world with a holy fear. Before You every nation is revealed. Each is only a collection of people.

Let humanity reign! Let all the nations see their souls in the eyes of each other. Speak to minds and hearts, O Lord. Lift the lines of demarcation just enough for them to witness their common concerns, their ground for hope, and a united course of action.

Before You alone they stand humbled, yet together You can strengthen them in their resolve to free the future for all Your people. Let all the nations be judged before you, O Lord.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested.

S. 681. An act to provide for special rules relating to assistance concerning the Greensburg, Kansas tornado.

HONORING THE LIFE OF LUCILLE DOTSON FRANCOIS

(Ms. RICHARDSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life of Lucille Dotson Francois. I rise in honor of this incredible lady because, although I had not met her in person, but because of the lives that she has left behind, particularly in her daughter, Yvonne Wheeler.

Ms. Francois recently passed after living 85 fulfilling years. She was a devoted public servant. She grew up in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, the same area where my own grandmother grew up.

She served in the East Baton Rouge School System until she retired, raising our young people and creating a new generation—one that I think all of us would agree is something we should not take lightly. After that, she extended her services working in the community, enjoying coordinating various events. But most of all what she loved was building young people and building family.

She was a devoted wife, mother, grandmother, and great grandmother. I'd like to personally acknowledge the incredible work that all of her family has done, and particularly that of her daughter, who has led an incredible life and assisted us in California.

May her family be blessed. Please join me, Mr. Speaker, as we acknowledge the life of Lucille Dotson Francois.

REPUBLICAN BUDGET PROMOTES AMERICAN FAMILIES AND SMALL BUSINESSES

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, Republicans are offering a budget that will move our country in a new direction of fiscal responsibility. It provides commonsense support for small businesses, which create the majority of jobs in America. It provides relief for American families. It keeps our promise to future generations by addressing entitlement spending so we do not go bankrupt in the future.

The Democrat budget, on the other hand, is a Washington-as-usual borrow and spending spree. It is no change. It raises taxes on American families and small businesses \$1.4 trillion. It produces record spending levels and, not surprising, record borrowing.

Republicans are offering a smarter way forward, one where we limit spending, help small businesses create jobs, and control the debt that threatens the solvency of the dollar and Social Security.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11th in the global war on terrorism.

INTERNET FREEDOM

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Today, I, along with several of my colleagues, will be sending a letter to major Internet service providers, including Google, Microsoft, and Yahoo, expressing our concern regarding the worsening Internet restrictions in Vietnam.

It has come to our attention that the Vietnamese Government intends to further restrict Internet access by asking major Internet service providers to assist them in policing the Internet.

The letter strongly urges the Internet service providers to protect the Vietnamese people's freedom of speech and expression by providing technologies in a manner that respects individuals' rights and their privacy.

The Internet has become a major source of communication and information for the Vietnamese citizens. As Members of Congress, we must continue to advocate for Vietnamese citizens' freedom of speech and their freedom of expression. Upholding these freedoms is a corporate social responsibility, and Internet service providers must do everything they can to provide Internet freedom for the people of Vietnam, despite the pressure that is coming from the Vietnamese Government.

GM: GOVERNMENT MOTORS

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government has gotten into the business of picking winners and losers in the automobile industry. The government has decided that GM is a winner and Chrysler is a loser unless—Chrysler obeys the Federal Government and partners with Italian carmaker Fiat to begin producing Chrysler Fiat as automobiles. No telling what those cars will look like.

Since when, Mr. Speaker, did the Federal Government get the authority to fire CEOs of private companies and take over their businesses?

Well, the Feds did just that by taking control of GM and Chrysler. Now we should change the name of both companies to "Government Motors."

If you like the way Uncle Sam runs government businesses like Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, the Post Office, FEMA, and the IRS, you will love the new Government Motors automobiles.

The Federal Government is picking winners in the auto industry with taxpayer bailout money. We don't need any more bailouts. The government spends too much, borrows too much, taxes too much. The government needs to stop cutting deals with special interest groups and start cutting taxes for Americans.

And that's just the way it is.